

## Appomattox Court House National Historical Park

When people think of Appomattox Court House, they are usually reminded of the momentous event that took place there on April 9, 1865. General Robert E. Lee's surrender of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia to General Ulysses S. Grant signaled the end of one of the bloodiest chapters in American history – the Civil War. Few people know that one of the witnesses to the surrender was a Native American, Ely S. Parker, also known as Do-ne-ho-ga-wa ("Open Door"). Parker, an Iroquois, was educated, in a law firm, to be a lawyer, but since Native Americans were not citizens, he could not take the bar examination. He was also formally educated as an engineer and worked in this capacity for the U.S. Treasury Department.

He became friends with Grant when Grant was a captain. Later, during the Civil War, General Grant appointed Parker to his staff. After the war, Parker would eventually reach the rank of Brevet Brigadier General.

At Appomattox Court House, Lt. Colonel Parker wrote the final draft of General Grant's letter that spelled out the terms of surrender.

***"Having finished it, I brought it to General Grant, who signed it, sealed it and then handed it to General Lee." Lt. Colonel Ely Parker***

At the surrender meeting, seeing that Parker was a Native American, General Lee remarked to Parker, ***"I am glad to see one real American here."*** Parker later stated, ***"I shook his hand and said, 'We are all Americans'".***



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